

Construction Sites

- Use plants to create silt fences to hold back loose soil from falling into street gutters, where rainwater can wash them into storm drains. Soil that erodes from construction sites contributes to environmental degradation such as clogging fish gills, damaging fish habitat and blocking the light needed for the plants to survive.



- Dispose of wash water from concrete mixers at the contractor's site or into a large hole that is big enough to contain it; never allow the waste water "to run" down the street gutter into the storm drains.
- Cover used oils, solvents and other hazardous fluids with secondary containment, both in case of a spill and to prevent rainfall from contact, which would wash hazardous fluids into nearby waterways.
- Maintain a "dry site" by using off site facilities to conduct vehicle and equipment maintenance such as changing oil and other fluids, and perform work in designated areas only.

March 2006



Citizens voluntarily label storm drains to discourage dumping of pollutants into water supplies.



For More Information on Solving Water Pollution Problems Using Plants

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov>

USDA NRCS National Plant Materials Center
Building 509 BARC-East
Beaver Dam Road
Beltsville, Maryland 20705
Phone: (301) 504-8175
Fax: (301) 504-8741
URL: <http://Plant-Materials.nrcs.usda.gov>

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WHAT YOU DO COMES BACK TO YOU



Trash enters storm drains that flow untreated into the Anacostia River, and on to the Chesapeake Bay.

If it's in the Bay, it's in Us

The health of the Chesapeake Bay and the seafood that you eat are directly connected to how you use your own backyard, streets, and neighborhood.

Anything poured into a gutter or a storm drain, such as trash, used motor oil or antifreeze, is not removed by a treatment process and flows directly to the Chesapeake Bay, usually via neighborhood sewer systems.

What is storm water?

Storm water is water from rain or snow that seeps into the ground or drains into storm sewers/*storm drains*. These are the drains that you see at street corners or at low points on the sides of your streets. Pollutants that storm water carries are a concern for keeping the Chesapeake Bay and our waters clean.

Where does the storm water go after it drains into a storm drain?

Storm water that does not seep into the ground, called *storm water runoff*, drains into systems of underground pipes or gullies and may travel for many miles before being released into the Chesapeake Bay.

What are common contributors to storm water pollution?

Used oil and grease, gas, antifreeze, paint, pesticides, solvents, detergents, pet waste, pavement wash offs, trash, yard waste, soil and wash water.

How can plants help?

Grasses, trees and shrubs can filter pollutants from the water and create buffers to hold back pollutants; and plants native to the local ecological area require the use of less water, fertilizer, and pesticides, which could pollute our waters.

What can you do to prevent pollutants from entering the Chesapeake Bay?

The following are steps you can take to help keep our waters clean at residential, industrial and construction sites.

Residential Areas

- Use plants native to the ecological area because they require less water, fertilizer and pesticides, and can absorb pollutants from storm water.
- Compost yard waste and use them for fertilizer around the yard.



- Recycle used oil in a clean, sealed, plastic container. Vehicle fluids such as oil, gas and antifreeze are the #1 surface water quality problems nationwide.
- Deliver old paint, pesticides, solvents and batteries to a local hazardous waste drop off facility.
- Clean up after your pet. Pet waste left on the ground gets carried away by storm water, contributing harmful parasites to our waterways.
- SWEEP your pavement! Hosing off pavements washes pollutants into storm drains leading straight to rivers and the bay. (BELIEVE IT OR NOT: In many communities it is illegal to let water from your property enter a storm drain!)
- Cover trash bins to prevent litter such as styrofoam, plastic and paper from blowing into inlets; and **do not litter**.

Industrial Sites

- Use plants to filter pollutants so they don't enter the groundwater, to create buffers to contain pollutants, and to leech out toxins that have spilled into the soil.



- Wash vehicles or equipment in wash bays hooked up to a sanitary sewer (a sewer that leads to a treatment facility).
- Divert rainfall runoff from fueling-islands as well as outdoor storage and waste areas by building a canopy over them.
- Discharge waste such as detergents, oil, and grease as well as processed water of any type to a sanitary sewer. Wastewater is a huge contributor to pollution in the Chesapeake Bay.
- Reduce smokestack emissions that enter the air and come back to the ground in rainwater.
- Be prepared: create a spill prevention plan, make sure all employees know spill cleanup procedures, have cleanup materials nearby
- Contain and clean up spills immediately.